

## New Directions

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### Newsfile

Editorial Staff

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## NEWSFILE

**A new organization has been launched** to increase the support and ensure the continued development of the critically acclaimed Howard University Choir.

Called Friends of the Howard University Choir, the organization was conceived by Celestine Cheek, wife of Howard University President James E. Cheek, and includes Howard employees, alumni and friends who are aficionados of the high caliber of choral music the choir has come to represent.

The group hopes to increase the visibility of the choir through a variety of publicity and fundraising activities, according to its president, Joseph B. Morris, chairman of the university's science policy and planning council under the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

Conducted by J. Weldon Norris, professor of music and assistant dean of the College of Fine Arts, the choir has performed in a wide variety of settings in the U.S. and abroad, including the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C., and Carnegie Hall in New York City.

This October, Arabesque Recordings released "Hallelujah Handel," an album featuring selections from Handel oratorios and operas performed by the choir with the Handel Festival Orchestra under the baton of Stephen Simon.

The invitation to make the recording came in the wake of glowing reviews the choir received following its 1983 and 1984 appearances at the Handel Festival at the Kennedy Center. The Washington Times headlined its review of the 1983 concert, "Howard U. Choir

Shows How to Handle Handel," while a Washington Post critic wrote that the choir "ought to be sharing more of the Kennedy Center choral duties."

**Professor Kenneth Olden**, deputy director of the university's Cancer Center, was appointed director of the Center and chairman of the Oncology Department in November. He succeeded Dr. Jack E. White, the Cancer Center's first director (since 1972) who remains on the medical faculty as a full time professor.



Before coming to Howard, Olden held senior research positions with the National Institutes of Health from 1974 until he resigned in 1980.

Born in Parrottsville, Tenn., he holds degrees from Knoxville College (B.S.), the University of Michigan (M.S.) and Temple University (Ph.D.). He did further study as a research fellow in physiology at Harvard Medical School.

He is the author or co-author of more than 70 scientific papers, including two that were listed by Current Contents: Life Sciences as being among the 100 most cited papers of 1978-1979.

**At the second meeting of the National Advisory Council for Research**, which was held on campus in early December, President James E. Cheek said the university

is "interested in the Council's advice on the leadership role that Howard may provide in enhancing research innovation in the private sector through the Federal Small Business Innovation Program . . ."

Further, he noted that the National Science Foundation is giving support and encouragement to ongoing research activities at the university, particularly in the Office of Public and Private Sector Research Initiatives.

The Howard meeting culminated in visits to research and teaching installations on campus, including the new \$13.5 million School of Business and Public Administration building and the \$8.5 million undergraduate library.

The National Advisory Council first met last June at the National Academy of Sciences.

**"75 Years of Engineering Education Excellence"** is the theme of the School of Engineering's 75th anniversary celebration which is being held this academic year.

The observance of the anniversary includes an alumni campaign designed to raise \$5 million for an endowed student aid fund and the creation of a unified alumni network.

Through the years, the school has stood in the forefront of the movement to increase the number of Black Americans and other minorities in engineering professions. Of the estimated 15,000 Black Americans holding engineering degrees, 20 percent have been produced by Howard.

Courses in engineering were first introduced at the university in 1907 in the School of Manual Arts and Applied Sciences, which offered a two-year program. In 1910, a four-year curriculum was introduced featuring degree programs in electrical, mechanical and civil engineering. In 1934, the school was renamed the School of Engineering and Architecture, and then, in 1970, it took its present name and organization as a result of the separation of Engineering and Architecture into two independent units.



Today, the school provides instruction in all the major engineering disciplines, offers degrees at the bachelor's, master's and doctoral levels, and undertakes research in such areas as microelectronics, large space structures, cascade fluidized bed combustion of coal, robotics and computer-aided manufacturing and design — all in keeping with its goal "to provide young men and women education for the future," observes Dean M. Lucius Walker, Jr.

**The College of Medicine** has received a \$1.3 million research grant from the Division of Research Resources of the National Institutes of Health (NIH). The funding will enable the college to expand the activities of its office for research and establish such research entities as a human immunogenetics laboratory, a veterinary clinical pathology laboratory and a biostatistical unit.



The grant is one of several made by the NIH division as part of its Research Centers in Minority Institutions (RCMI) program.

Two other colleges in the health affairs division also have received major grants recently.

The College of Nursing has been awarded a three-year \$480,000 grant from the Pew Memorial Trust of Philadelphia to support the development and implementation of a master's degree program in primary health care nursing. The new program will focus on the primary

family health care of urban and rural underserved populations.

The College of Allied Health Sciences received \$297,000 from the U.S. Department of Education, Rehabilitation Services Administration, to support a project entitled "Long-Term Training: Physical Therapy." This project aims to prepare physical therapy majors to work with severely disabled clients.

#### **The Howard University Large Space Structures Institute** —

based in the School of Engineering — has received \$480,000 from the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) to support its work for the 1985-86 academic year. The new funding brings to \$1,487,000 the amount the institute has received from the space agency over the past three years.

The institute is engaged in developing the theoretical knowledge needed to design and construct large structural systems (spanning a mile or more) to be used in outer space. Such research is critical to designing a future space station. (See "Space Research at Howard: Heralding a New Age" in the October 1984 issue of *New Directions*.)

**Storytellers**, followed Pied Piper-like by enchanted children, converged on Howard's Blackburn Center for four days in November as the third annual Festival of Black Storytelling got underway.

Entitled, "How We Got Over: Black Storytelling and Survival," the festival featured workshops, lecture demonstrations and master storytelling classes presented by storytellers from the U.S., the Caribbean and Canada. Among those attracted to the events were a good sampling of children from some of the city's preschool centers and elementary schools.

Capturing some of the spirit of the festival, an article in *The Hilltop*, Howard's student newspaper, quoted Philadelphia's traveling storyteller Linda Goss as she delivered a rap on her art: "An ancient art that's also brand new. It's mystical;

it's history; it's magical; it's mystery . . ." Teasing rap recording groups for being "jive," she added, "I don't need to scratch no wax, 'cause storytelling's live."

The festival was organized by Goss and Mary Carter Smith, a Baltimore-based storyteller.

#### **Blacks suffer disproportionately**

from acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) yet "there's still a belief in the Black community that AIDS is a white man's disease," said Dr. Wayne Greaves, chief of infectious diseases at Howard University Hospital at a recent press briefing at the Blackburn Center.

Speaking of the need to convince people that AIDS is "color blind," he pointed out that nationally Blacks accounted for 25 percent of the approximately 14,000 cases of the deadly disease reported to the Center for Disease Control up until that time. That percentage was more than double the proportion of Blacks in the total population (about 12 percent).

In the case of children with AIDS (who acquire the disease either in the womb from an infected mother or through contaminated blood in transfusions later in life), the disproportion is even more dramatic, he said. Out of 191 cases reported in the nation through the end of September, 107 — or 56 percent — occurred in Black children.

In speculating on the reasons for the high incidence of AIDS among Blacks, Greaves cited the poor access many Blacks have to health care, in general, which makes them more vulnerable to infections, and observed that many Blacks are so concerned with the day-to-day struggle of trying to earn a living that they tend to visit a doctor only when they are in the advanced stages of a disease.

Added to this is the fact that AIDS has been more concentrated in the nation's urban centers which tend to be disproportionately Black. And added to this is what he called "a lack of understanding" in the Black community about how AIDS is



transmitted and how it can be avoided. (i.e. Because AIDS primarily has struck homosexual and bisexual men, intravenous (IV) drug abusers and recipients of contaminated blood, prevention measures would include practicing "safe sex" guidelines, stopping all IV drug abuse — especially the sharing needles — and agreeing to operations involving blood transfusions only when absolutely necessary.)



Because there is no available drug at present which can reverse the destruction to the immune system that AIDS causes, the major means to lower the incidence of the deadly disease is through public education, Greaves said. Yet most educational efforts have been targeted almost exclusively at the white homosexual population. "There are other high risk groups who should be targeted," said the physician-epidemiologist. "We need more resources and educational programs targeted at Blacks and Hispanics and IV drug abusers . . ."

Before joining the Howard University hospital staff and medical school faculty in January 1984, Greaves worked for four years at the Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta where he was an epidemic intelligence service officer and a clinical research investigator in the division of venereal disease control.

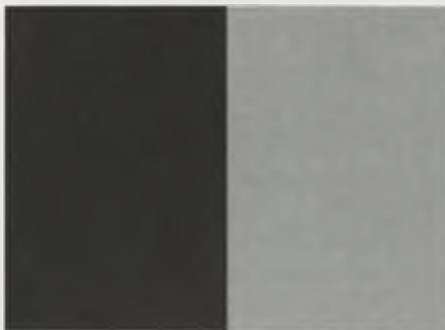
**A task force has been established** to implement an agreement to establish linkages between Howard and the State University of Haiti. The agreement was signed last March by Howard President James E. Cheek and President Raoul Pierre-Louis of the University of Haiti.

Under the terms of the agreement, the two universities will "undertake to promote and encourage, among their different programs and departments, concrete actions of cooperation and solidarity, with the objective of strengthening and improving their systems of education which concern the development of mankind, teaching, research and other areas of general academic interest."

More specifically, the agreement calls for exchanging professors, students, resources and materials; for developing cooperative research projects; and for training "specialists capable of developing appropriate technologies for the conditions that exist in Haiti."

The task force is headed by Alice Green Burnette, Howard's director of development, and includes nine other administrators and faculty members.

Haiti also was the focus — and the setting — for an international conference on "Health for All by the Year 2,000," which was sponsored by the university's Department of Psychiatry in cooperation with the World Health Organization. James L. Collins, chairman of the department, delivered the opening address at the conference which was held in Port-au-Prince in November.



**Washington, D.C., Mayor Marion Barry, Jr., Howard President James E. Cheek** and their respective cabinets met at the Howard Inn in November and discussed areas of mutual interest, including economic development.

President Cheek and Mayor Barry both stressed the strong bond between the university and the city, and Howard's role in manpower training and its contribution to the city's economic revitalization.

The mayor noted several university-sponsored ventures, particularly the Howard Inn where students receive training in hotel management.

Also present at the university-sponsored meeting were several members of the City Council, a number of them among the more than a thousand Howard graduates serving the city administration. □